



Technical Safeguards

HIPAA Security ♦ November 2003

General Requirement

HIPAA's [Security Rule](#) divides its protections into three categories: technical (discussed here), [administrative](#) and [physical](#) safeguards. Each safeguard category includes various [standards and implementation specifications](#). The Rule defines technical safeguards as “the technology and the policy and procedures for its use that protect [electronic protected health information \(EPHI\)](#) and control access to it. Earlier versions of the Rule further divided the category into “technical security mechanisms” and “technical security services.”

What Must Covered Entities do to Demonstrate Compliance?

Documented policies and procedures are required for compliance with the Security Rule. Comprehensive documentation of security measures is also required. Documentation must be kept current, and a historical record maintained as well. Those two standards are included in the matrix below for completeness, but they apply to all safeguard areas.

How Should the Matrix be Used?

The technical safeguards standards and specifications are presented in the matrix below. All standards are required. The implementation specifications associated with some standards provide additional detail when needed and are either required or addressable. For more information on a particular standard and the associated implementation specifications, follow the link in the left column. Note that the listing is very generic, reflecting the regulation's aims of “technology neutrality” and “scalability.”

Standard(s)	CFR section	Implementation Specification
All are required	(Code of Federal Regulations)	(r)=required; (a)=addressable
access control	164.312 (a)(1)	unique user identification (r) emergency access procedure (r) automatic logoff (a) encryption and decryption (a)
audit controls	164.312(b)	
integrity	164.312(c)(1)	mechanism to authenticate electronic PHI (a)
person or entity authentication	164.312(d)	
transmission security	164.312(e)(1)	integrity controls (a) encryption (a)
policies and procedures	164.316(a)	
documentation	164.316(b)(1)	time limit (r) availability (r) updates (r)

Matrix adapted from Appendix A to Subpart C of Part 164

See also:

[Appendix A to Subpart C of Part 164](#)

[Security Rule applicability](#)

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